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US Department of Transportation Dockets
Docket No. [FAA99-5926] – S
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington DC 20590

August 17, 1999

PT. OF TRANSPORTATION
DOCKET SECTION
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Dear friends at the FAA,

It has come to our attention that the FAA is proposing to amend the operating rules for air tour flights over the Grand Canyon. This is a welcome change.

In 1987 excessive numbers of tour flights over Grand Canyon National Park caused the Congress to pass the *National Parks Overflights Act*. The intention of the Act was to “substantially restore the natural quiet” of Grand Canyon National Park. Common sense tells us if the number of overflights was so high in 1987 to require Congressional intervention, by 1999 the number of flights should have been reduced far below the 1987 number.

However, since the enactment of this important Act, the number of air tours disrupting the Grand Canyon has more than doubled!

This is unacceptable. Our National Parks are treasures that were set aside so their natural resources could be protected from commercial exploitation. Exploitation of the Grand Canyon’s natural quiet has gone on too long. It is time to shut down all air tours over the Grand Canyon.

The Dragon Corridor should be shut down immediately to all air traffic. Within one year, the number of air tours should be reduced to 1987 levels. In three years, the number of flights should be reduced another 30%.

We suggest a continual reduction in the number of overflights for a period of ten years at which time all flights will be prohibited.

After ten years, overflights would require a special use permit for each individual flight. At this time, there should be a cap of 200 overflights per year with first consideration for scientific and educational flights.

People hike the long distance to Point Sublime so they can experience an incredible vista of the Grand Canyon, away from the crowds. The FAA's proposal to bring flights closer to the southern side of Point Sublime would destroy the experience of these dedicated visitors. It is unacceptable. Instead of merely directing air traffic, the FAA should be curtailing it.

Strong action against overflights of our National Parks by the FAA is long overdue. Please don't disappoint us again.

We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Rob Kulakofsky
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Kulakofsky", with a stylized, cursive script.